

Message Text

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12
ACTION NEA-10

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SUBJ: POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, PART II

REF: A) DACCA 4999; B) DACCA 4588; C) DACCA 5084

1. ALTHOUGH SIX ADDITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE RECEIVED OFFICIAL SANCTION FROM THE BDG, THE POLITICAL SCENE IN DACCA SEEMS TO BE AT LEAST TEMPORARILY IN THE DOULDRUMS. THE FIVE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PARTIES (REF A) CONTINUE TO HOLD ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS, BUT THE BDG HAS NOT YET GIVEN PERMISSION FOR OPEN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING TO START.

2. THE SIX NEW PARTIES GIVEN APPROVAL ARE:
A. THE BANGLADESH NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY OF PROFESSOR MUZAFFAR AHMED;
B. THE JATIYA JANATA PARTY OF GENERAL (RETIRED) ATAUL GHANI OSMANI;
C. THE BANGLADESH LABOR PARTY OF MAULANA ABDUL MATIN;
D. THE BANGLADESH JATIYA DAL OF MRS. AMENA BEGUM;
E. THE BANGLADESH TAPSHIL JATI (SCHEDULED CASTE)

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FEDERATION OF RASANAJ MANDOLI;

F. THE BANGLADESH GONOMAKTI DAL OF ABDUL HAMIL.

3. WHILE AT LEAST THREE OF THE NEWLY APPROVED PARTIES ARE LED BY WELL-KNOWN PERSONALITIES, THE PARTIES PROBABLY WILL NOT HAVE THE GENERAL POPULAR APPEAL OF THE ORIGINAL FIVE PARTIES GIVEN SANCTION. THE NAP/M OF PROFESSOR MUZAFFAR AHMED, KNOWN FOR ITS GENERALLY PRO-MOSCOW ORIENTATION, IS NOT EXPECTED TO GENERATE A LARGE FOLLOWING. THE NAP/M HAS OFTEN BEEN CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEFTIST ELEMENTS OF THE AWAMI LEAGUE, WHICH SO FAR IS CONSPICUOUS FOR ITS ABSENCE IN THE APPROVED GROUP. GENERAL OSMANI, WHO HAS NEVER BEEN A POLITICIAN BUT HAS HAD A CERTAIN NATIONAL POPULARITY AS A LEADER OF THE LIBERATION FORCES IN 1971, WE ARE TOLD HAS FORMED HIS SMALL POLITICAL PARTY MORE OUT OF PIQUE WITH MUSHTAQUE THAN OUT OF FIRM POLITICAL CONVICTION. APPARENTLY, OSMANI BECAME IRRITATED WHEN HE LEARNED THAT HIS NATIONALIST IMAGE WAS TO BE EXPLOITED BY MUSHTAQUE (REF B). ABDUL MATIN ON THE OTHER HAND IS A RADICAL LEFTIST WHO OPERATED REPORTEDLY AS A TERRORIST DURING LIBERATION STRUGGLE, ALLEGEDLY KILLING BOTH PAKISTAN ARMY SOLDIERS AND SO-CALLED FEUDAL LANDLORDS. HE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED BY SHEIKH MUJIB.

4. IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, ONLY POLITICAL LEADER TO GENERATE MUCH PUBLICITY HAS BEEN KHANDAKER MUSHTAQUE AHMED. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE HIS PARTY'S POLICIES, HE WAS QUESTIONED SHARPLY ABOUT HIS ROLE IN THE FOUR ASSASSINATIONS AT DACCA JAIL LAST NOVEMBER. MUSHTAQUE REPLIED SIMPLY THAT THE "SAD INCIDENT HAPPENED AFTER I WAS DESPOSED FROM THE PRESIDENCY." QUESTIONED ON HIS REACTION TO THE DEATH OF SHEIKH MUJIB, MUSTAQUE REPLIED THAT "KILLING WAS USUAL IN MOST COUPS." HIS PARTY'S POLICIES, WHICH SEEM TO MIRROR THOSE OF ALL OTHER ANNOUNCED PARTIES, WILL EMPHASIZE NATIONALISM, DEMOCRACY AND PEOPLE'S SOVEREIGNTY. MUSTAQUE ADDED THAT HIS PARTY WOULD ALSO "WORK FOR WORLD PEACE, PROGRESS OF MANKIND, HUMAN FREEDOM AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER BASED ON JUSTICE FOR ALL."

5. CONSPICUOUS FOR NOT CREATING ANY PUBLICITY HAS BEEN THE ARREST OF KAZI ZAFAR AHMED (REF C), LEADER OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STILL-DEFUNCT UNITED PEOPLE'S PARTY. JUST AS QUIETLY AS HE WAS ARRESTED, HE WAS RELEASED ON BAIL OCTOBER FIRST. ALTHOUGH THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BACK PAGE OF HOLIDAY, THE LEFTIST WEEKLY, THE CHARGES WERE NEVER ANNOUNCED.

6. COMMENT: THE QUESTION BEING ASKED AROUND DACCA THESE DAYS IS HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR ALL THE POLITICAL PARTIES TO

BE APPROVED? ACCORDING TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES REGU-
LATION ISSUED JULY 29, THE GOVERNMENT WAS TO HAVE GIVEN
ITS APPROVAL OR REJECTION WITHIN THREE WEEKS OF RECEIPT
OF PARTY CONSTITUTIONS. IT APPEARS NOW, HOWEVER, THAT
BECAUSE VARIOUS PARTIES ARE BEING GIVEN THE OPTION OF
RESUBMITTING THIER DOCUMENTS, THE APPROVAL PROCESS MIGHT
GJAG ON INDEFINITELY. SOME BANGLADESHI OBSERVERS,
QUICK TO SENSE A CONSPRIACY, HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE BDG
IS TRYING DELIBERATELY TO STALL THE CAMPAIGN PROCESS.
CHESLAW

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